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Sen. George fights to protect workers and families

Votes in favor of overtime pay and EITC

LANSING – Immediate effect was given to legislation today to save jobs and avert unnecessary costs and burdens when the minimum wage increase takes effect in October, said Sen. Tom George, R-Texas Township.

George sponsored an amendment to House Bill 6213 that ensures any employee who currently receives overtime compensation will continue to collect overtime pay when the minimum wage law takes effect Oct. 1.

“Today’s action signals to Michigan’s workers and job providers that we are looking out for their best interests and protecting them from the unemployment line,” George said. “We fought to keep current overtime standards in place for thousands of employees while protecting job providers from unnecessary changes to their payroll systems. This is good news for the entire state.”

House Bill 6213 protects the ability of many employees to work more than 40 hours per week. This affects those in such industries as retail sales, automotive sales, healthcare and newspapers, among others.

George also voted today in favor of legislation that would create a state tax credit to low-income families.

“Michigan’s economy continues to struggle and many of our citizens have been laid off or had their hours or wages cut,” George said. “Creating this tax credit will help struggling workers and their families. Bolstering their income will strengthen our economy and help get the state back on track.”

The credit would be equal to 20 percent of the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit and would be available for tax years beginning after Dec. 31, 2007. It would start at 10 percent in 2008 and increase to 20 percent in 2009.

The EITC is a tax cut for low-income families. It will help boost the state's lagging economy by putting more dollars in the pockets of people who have been struggling to buy needed goods and services.

"Today we cut taxes for the working poor, stimulated Michigan's economy, preserved thousands of jobs, created job opportunities for Michigan's youth and increased funding for college scholarships," said Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema, R-Wyoming. "Earlier this summer, I said that in return for fixing the overtime legislation, I was willing to do things that are good for Michigan's future. Every one of these bills accomplishes that goal."

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